AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) A process for the preparation of perfluoropolyethers of formula:

T-CFX'-O-R_f-CFX-T' (I)

wherein:

T is -F, C_1-C_3 perfluoroalkyl, -CH_2OH, -CH_2NH_2, -CHO;

T'= T with the proviso that when T is F or C_1-C_3 perfluoroalkyl, T' is -CH_2OH, -CH_2NH_2, -CHO;

X, X', equal to or different from each other, are -F or -CF_3;

R_f is selected from:

$-(C_2F_4O)_m(CF_2CF(CF_3)O)_n(CF_2O)_p(CF(CF_3)O)_q-$

wherein the sum n+m+p+q ranges from 2 to 200,

the (p+q)/(m+n+p+q) ratio is lower than or equal to 10:100, preferably comprised between 0.5:100 and 4:100,

the n/m ratio ranges from 0.2 to 6, preferably from 0.5 to 3; m, n, p, q are equal to or different from each other and when m, n range from 1 to 100, preferably from 1 to 80, then p, q range from 0 to 80, preferably from 0 to 50; the units with n, m, p, q indexes being statistically distributed along the chain;

$-(CF_2CF_2CF_2O)_r-$ wherein r ranges from 2 to 200,

$-(CF(CF_3)CF_2O)_s-$ wherein s ranges from 2 to 200,

comprising the following steps:

A) preparation of perfluoropolyethers of formula

T'-CFX'-O-R_f-CFX-COF (II)

wherein T' is -COF, -F, C_1-C_3 perfluoroalkyl, X, X', R_f are as above, by reduction of the corresponding perfluoropolyethers containing peroxidic bonds, with gaseous hydrogen in the presence of a catalyst formed by metals of the VIII group supported on metal fluorides, at a temperature from 20°C to 140°C, and at a pressure between 1 and 50 atm;

B) treatment of the formula (II) compounds with inorganic chlorides, preferably $CaCl_2$, by heating at a temperature in the range 100°-150°C obtaining perfluoropolyethers having acylchloride -COCl end groups;

B') treatment of the formula (II) acylfluoride or of the corresponding ester or of the corresponding acylchloride with gaseous ammonia, obtaining the corresponding amide, subsequently dehydrated preferably with P_2O_5, at a temperature in the range 150°-200°C, preferably at 170°C, with the obtainment of perfluoropolyethers with nitrile -CN end groups;

C) reduction of the perfluoropolyethers with acylchloride end groups, obtained in step B), or with nitrile end groups, obtained in step B'), of formula (IIa):

T'''-CFX'-O-R_f-CFX-T'''' (IIa) wherein:

T''' = -F, C_1-C_3 perfluoroalkyl, -CN, -COCl,

T''''= T''' with the proviso that when T''' is -F or C_1-C_3 perfluoroalkyl, T'''' is -CN, -COCl,

with gaseous hydrogen in the presence of a catalyst constituted by metals of the VIII group selected from Pd, Rh, Ru, supported on solid metal fluorides, at a temperature

from 20°C to 150°C, preferably from 80°C to 120°C and at a pressure between 1 and 50 atm, preferably between 1 and 10 atm, optionally in the presence of inert solvents.

2. (Original) A process according to claim 1, wherein R_f is selected from the following structures:

$-(CF_2CF_2O)_m-(CF_2O)_p-$,

$-(CF_2CF(CF_3)O)_n-(CF_2O)_p-(CF(CF_3)O)_q$.

3. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1~~claims 1-2~~, wherein the metal fluoride of step C) is selected from the group formed by CaF_2, BaF_2, MgF_2, AlF_3, preferably CaF_2.

4. (Currently Amended) A process according to ~~claims 1-3~~claim 1, wherein the concentration of the VIII group metal on the metal fluoride of the catalyst of step C) is comprised beteeen 0.1% and 10% with respect to the total weight of the catalyst, preferably between 1% and 2% by weight.